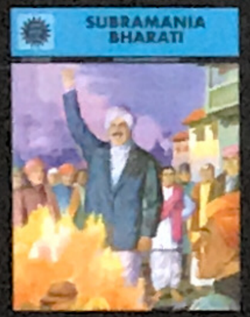
VISIONARIES

LOKAMANYA TILAK

'Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it' -- this clarion call was given by Bal Gangadhar Tilak. He was a towering figure in the Indian Independence movement. A nationalist to the core, he believed strongly that modern education would inculcate patriotism and self-respect in the people. His inspiring speeches and writing landed Tilak in jail several times. But this did not dampen his spirit or will to cast off the yoke of foreign rule from his motherland.

OTHER ACK VISIONARIES



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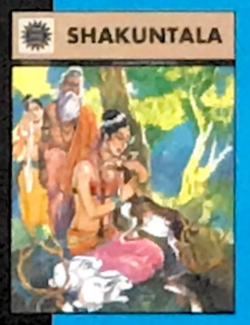

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AMAR CHITRA KATHA

LOKAMANYA TILAK

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LOKAMANYA TILAK

ON JULY 23, 1856, GANGADHAR PANT TILAK, THE HEADMASTER OF THE LOCAL MARATHI SCHOOL IN RATNAGIRI, WAS PACING UP AND DOWN THE VERANDA OF HIS HOUSE. HIS WIFE WAS ABOUT TO HAVE A BABY.

HE HAD THREE DAUGHTERS, BUT LIKE OTHER PARENTS OF HIS TIME HE LONGED FOR A SON.

IT'S A GIRL!

WHAT! ANOTHER DAUGHTER!

POOR, DADA! I WILL TELL HIM THE TRUTH.

AUNTY'S TEASING YOU, DADA! IT'S A BOY!

YES, IT IS. BUT DON'T BE JUBILANT AND INVITE BAD LUCK.

OH! HOW SUPERSTITIOUS CAN YOU GET! LIKE WHOM DOES HE LOOK?

WHOEVER HE LOOKED LIKE, THE CHILD, BAL GANGADHAR TILAK, WAS DESTINED TO BECOME GREAT

BAL HAD HIS EARLY EDUCATION AT HOME, UNDER THE STRICT SUPERVISION OF HIS FATHER.

DADA, THIS SUM IS TOO SIMPLE. GIVE ME A MORE DIFFICULT ONE.

LATER, MY SON. NOW WE'LL PRACTISE THE SANSKRIT SHLOKAS.

WHEN BAL WAS TEN YEARS OLD, HIS FATHER WAS TRANSFERRED TO PUNE.

THIS IS A GODSEND! BAL CAN NOW GO TO THE BEST OF SCHOOLS.

SHORTLY AFTER THEY CAME TO PUNE, BAL'S MOTHER DIED. IT WAS HIS AUNT WHO NOW LOOKED AFTER HIM.

BAL, YOU'VE FORGOTTEN YOUR SLATE.

BUT I DON'T NEED IT, AUNTY.

I CAN DO SUMS IN MY MIND.

I KNOW, I KNOW. BUT YOU MUST CARRY A SLATE. ALL THE OTHER BOYS DO.

BAL WAS NO DOUBT INTELLIGENT. BUT HE WAS, TO HIS TEACHER'S ANNOYANCE, EQUALLY STUBBORN. ONE DAY AT SCHOOL —

OH, NO! HE'S HERE! HE'S COME!

PUT AWAY THE PEANUTS! RUN TO YOUR SEATS! TAKE UP YOUR BOOKS!

THE TEACHER ENTERED AND TOOK ONE LOOK AT THE CLASS.

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? YOU OUGHT TO BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELVES!

WHEN THE BOYS PRETENDED TO BE SORRY FOR WHAT THEY HAD DONE, THE TEACHER RELENTED.

ALL RIGHT. THIS TIME I'LL LET YOU OFF. NOW CLEAN UP THE MESS, AND GET BACK TO YOUR WORK.

AS THE BOYS BENT DOWN TO PICK UP THE SHELLS, THE TEACHER'S EYE FELL ON BAL.

HEY, YOU! DO YOU THINK YOU ARE A PRINCE? COME ON, GET TO WORK.

I'M SORRY, SIR, BUT I WON'T.

WHAT!

I DIDN'T EAT IN CLASS. I DIDN'T MAKE THE MESS. SO WHY SHOULD I TAKE THE PUNISHMENT?

YOU IMPUDENT, OBSTINATE CHILD! I'LL TEACH YOU TO TALK BACK TO YOUR TEACHER!

BEFORE YOU DO, I AM GOING HOME, SIR. I WILL NOT SUBMIT TO UNFAIR TREATMENT.

TRUTHFUL, FEARLESS, PROUD — SUCH WAS THE STUFF BAL WAS MADE OF.

HE JOINED ANOTHER SCHOOL. BUT THOUGH HE WAS AN EXCELLENT STUDENT HE DID NOT DO WELL IN EXAMINATIONS.

WHY DO YOU ALWAYS PICK THE MOST DIFFICULT QUESTIONS, BAL? IF YOU ANSWERED THE EASY ONES, YOU'D GET FULL MARKS!

IT'S NOT MARKS THAT I'M AFTER. IT'S KNOWLEDGE. SO THERE'S NO POINT IN ATTEMPTING WHAT I ALREADY KNOW.

WHEN BAL WAS FIFTEEN, HE WAS MARRIED TO A TEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL NAMED SATYABHAMA. CHILD MARRIAGE WAS COMMON IN THOSE DAYS.

HIS FATHER-IN-LAW WANTED TO BUY HIM A PRESENT.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE A GOLD RING, BAL?

IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'D PREFER BOOKS. THEY ARE MORE VALUABLE.

THAT SAME YEAR, BAL'S FATHER DIED.

BAL, YOU MUST GET OVER YOUR GRIEF AND CONCENTRATE ON YOUR STUDIES.

THAT'S WHAT DADA WOULD WANT ME TO DO. YES, I MUST GET OVER MY GRIEF, UNCLE.

AND GET OVER IT HE DID. HE WAS SEVENTEEN WHEN HE JOINED THE DECCAN COLLEGE. ON THE FIRST DAY AS THE BOYS ASSEMBLED AT THE MESS FOR LUNCH —

WELL, WELL, TILAK! HOW ORTHODOX CAN WE GET! A SILK DHOTI — IT REMINDS ME OF MY FATHER AND GRANDFATHER!

HA! HA! HA!

THE BOY WHO HAD MADE THE COMMENT WAS DAJI ABAJI KHARE.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT? IT'S OUR TRADITIONAL DRESS! DON'T THE EUROPEANS HAVE THEIR FORMAL DRESS FOR DINNERS?

SHABASH!

AFTER THE MEAL —

YOU ARE OUTSPOKEN AREN'T YOU, TILAK? I HAVE MUCH TO LEARN FROM YOU.

AND, I, FROM YOU, KHARE.

LATER, ON THEIR WAY TO COLLEGE —

I WANT TO IMPROVE MY PHYSIQUE, KHARE.

COME TO THE GYM WITH ME, THEN. I'LL MAKE YOU A PEHLWAN.*

AND THUS BEGAN THE LIFELONG FRIENDSHIP OF TILAK AND KHARE.

ONE PUNCH AND YOU'LL FALL FLAT, TILAK!

DON'T BRAG, KHARE. I'VE JUST BEGUN. BESIDES, I'LL LICK YOU IN SWIMMING.

* WRESTLER

OF ALL SPORTS, SWIMMING WAS BAL'S FAVOURITE. ONE DAY HE AMAZED KHARE BY FLOATING ON HIS BACK FOR HOURS WITH A LOAF OF BREAD HELD ALOFT IN ONE HAND.

SEE, KHARE, NOT A DROP OF WATER ON THIS LOAF!

TILAK'S STAMINA HOWEVER BELIED HIS FOOD HABITS.

DAL AND RICE FOR ME, AS USUAL.

NO, MY PEHLWAN. YOU CANNOT SURVIVE ON ONLY THAT NOW. YOU WILL EAT CHAPATIES, GHEE, CURDS, FRESH VEGETABLES...

... AND PLENTY OF MILK.

TILAK'S DIET AND HEALTH NO DOUBT IMPROVED. BUT WHEN THE F.Y. ARTS RESULTS WERE ANNOUNCED —

I'VE FAILED. HM.. M.. M.. I HAVE ACHIEVED ONE GOAL—A ROBUST PHYSIQUE. BUT...

...AT THE COST OF MY OTHER GOAL. I'LL HAVE TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN BOOKS AND SPORTS.

AND SO WELL DID HE DO IT THAT HE WAS HONOURED BY THE BRILLIANT MATHEMATICIAN, PROF. CHHATRE HIMSELF. FOR, ONCE WHEN A STUDENT WENT TO THE PROFESSOR SEEKING HELP —

I'M BUSY JUST NOW... BUT WAIT! GO TO TILAK. HE WILL SOLVE IT FOR YOU WITH EASE.

NOT ALL THE PROFESSORS, HOWEVER, APPRECIATED TILAK'S SUPERIOR INTELLIGENCE.

MR. TILAK, WHY DON'T YOU TAKE DOWN NOTES WHEN I LECTURE?

I DON'T NEED TO, SIR. I HAVE MASTERED THE SANSKRIT PORTION ON MY OWN.

IT WAS THIS FRANKNESS THAT EARNED TILAK THE NICKNAME — MR. BLUNT.

NEVERTHELESS HIS WORDS CARRIED WEIGHT WITH HIS FELLOW STUDENTS. ONCE IN THE COLLEGE HOSTEL —

WE LOST OUR INDEPENDENCE BECAUSE OF DISUNITY...

YOU ARE WRONG. THE BRITISH TRICKED US INTO SLAVERY.

AND THE BOY REACHED OUT FOR THE PICTURE OF THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND, HANGING ON THE WALL.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WHAT I OUGHT TO HAVE DONE MUCH EARLIER...

...TRAMPLING IT! THIS IS WHAT THE BRITISH DESERVE!

STOP IT! YOU... YOU...

...COWARD! DO YOU THINK THAT TRAMPLING A MERE PICTURE MAKES YOU A HERO?

DISPLAY YOUR LOVE OF FREEDOM IN A MORE WORTHY MANNER! HAMMER THE THRONE OF ENGLAND, IF YOU CAN! IF NOT, AT LEAST CHERISH SUCH AN AMBITION.

THE HERO MEEKLY HEARD HIM OUT!

SOON AFTER GRADUATING IN ARTS, TILAK TOOK UP THE STUDY OF LAW. AROUND THAT TIME HE STRUCK UP A FRIENDSHIP WITH GOPAL GANESH AGARKAR, AN M.A. STUDENT, AND A BUDDING CHAMPION OF SOCIAL REFORMS.

WITHOUT EDUCATING THE PEOPLE, WE CANNOT HOPE TO INTRODUCE SOCIAL REFORMS.

I DON'T SEE WHAT IMPACT SOCIAL REFORMS IMPOSED BY AN ALIEN GOVERNMENT CAN HAVE ON THE PEOPLE?

WE MUST HAVE POLITICAL FREEDOM FIRST!

BUT EVEN THAT CANNOT BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT MODERN EDUCATION!

THERE I AGREE WITH YOU!

THE IDEA WAS SOON PUT INTO SHAPE. WITH THE HELP OF VISHNUSHASTRI CHIPLUNKAR, THE TWO FRIENDS FOUNDED A SCHOOL.

PEOPLE REFER TO IT AS THE NEW SCHOOL. LET'S NAME IT 'THE NEW ENGLISH SCHOOL.'

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE INAUGURATION AS TILAK AND HIS CLOSE FRIEND NAMJOSHI WERE GOING THE ROUNDS —

HOW CAN WE EXPECT THE CHILDREN TO SIT ON THIS JAGGED FLOOR, TILAK?

LET'S LEVEL IT OUT, THEN.

THE TWO FRIENDS WORKED HARD.

AT THE END OF IT THEY WERE SO EXHAUSTED THAT...

...THEY FELL ASLEEP IN THE SCHOOL, WITH A BLACK BOARD FOR A BED!

THE SCHOOL ATTRACTED THE BEST OF TALENTS. SUCH AN ENCOURAGING RESPONSE INSPIRED THE FRIENDS TO WORK WITH GREATER ENTHUSIASM.

WE'RE LUCKY TO CATCH THEM YOUNG. AND IF WE DON'T SUCCEED IN INCULCATING SELF-RESPECT AND LOVE FOR THE COUNTRY IN THEM...

WE WILL SUCCEED! IF ONLY WE COULD REACH THE ADULTS TOO!

TILAK'S WORDS SET CHIPLUNKAR THINKING. ONE DAY —

I'VE FOUND A WAY TO REACH THE ADULTS! WHY DON'T WE START A WEEKLY?

WHY ONE, LET'S HAVE TWO! ONE IN ENGLISH AND THE OTHER IN MARATHI!

TILAK! NONE OF US HAVE THE JOURNALISTIC EXPERIENCE FOR ONE, AND YOU TALK OF TWO.

BUT, AGARKAR, YOU HAVE MUCH TO SAY. YOUR HEART IS BURNING WITH PATRIOTISM! WORDS WILL FLOW OF THEIR OWN ACCORD!

AND SO THE TWO WEEKLIES — KESARI IN MARATHI AND THE MAHRATTA IN ENGLISH WERE BORN.

THERE! OUR OFFICE! THE EDITOR'S CHAIR, DESK AND STATIONERY!

WHAT ABOUT THE PRINTING MACHINE, NAMJOSHI?

LEAVE THAT TO ME, AGARKAR.

NAMJOSHI MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR A SECOND-HAND PRINTING MACHINE AND HAD IT SMUGGLED INTO THE SCHOOL ONE NIGHT.

SHH! WE DON'T WANT TO WAKE ANYONE!

SINCE THEY COULDN'T AFFORD A MECHANIC, TILAK SET IT UP.

DO YOU THINK WE'LL FINISH PRINTING IT IN TIME?

WE MUST, NAMJOSHI. THE COPIES MUST REACH THE PEOPLE EARLY IN THE MORNING.

BEFORE THE BREAK OF DAY, TILAK AND HIS FRIENDS THEMSELVES DISTRIBUTED COPIES FROM DOOR TO DOOR.

केसरी.

HAVE YOU READ TODAY'S KESARI...

I HAVE. THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT THE DIWAN OF KOLHAPUR.

IT SEEMS HE WANTS TO DEPOSE THE ADOPTED PRINCE. TILAK HAS EXPOSED HIM.

TOTALLY! THE DOCUMENTS PUBLISHED IN KESARI PROVE THAT THE DIWAN IS PLAYING A DANGEROUS GAME.

BUT THE DOCUMENTS WHICH TILAK AND AGARKAR HAD PUBLISHED, UNFORTUNATELY TURNED OUT TO BE FABRICATED.

THE DIWAN SUED THE EDITORS AND HAD THEM JAILED IN SPITE OF THE APOLOGY OFFERED.

THE DOCUMENTS MAY BE FALSE, BUT I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE DIWAN IS UP TO SOME MISCHIEF.

ANYWAY TILAK AND AGARKAR DON'T DESERVE TO BE IMPRISONED FOR PUBLISHING WHAT THEY BELIEVED TO BE A GENUINE DOCUMENT.

THE VIEWS OF THE PEOPLE OF PUNE WERE OPENLY EXPRESSED IN THE ROUSING WELCOME GIVEN TO TILAK AND AGARKAR ON THEIR RELEASE FROM JAIL.

SOON AFTER THEIR RELEASE, THE FRIENDS FORMED THE DECCAN EDUCATION SOCIETY AND THE FERGUSSON COLLEGE WAS STARTED.

ONE GREAT THING ABOUT TILAK IS THAT WHILE HE ENCOURAGES MODERN EDUCATION, HE RESPECTS OUR CUSTOMS WHICH MANY OF OUR REFORMERS DO NOT.

BUT THIS FAITH IN TILAK WAS PUT TO THE TEST, IN A RATHER MISCHIVOUS MANNER, BY ONE GOPALRAO JOSHI.

WE HAVE SEVERAL REFORMERS IN PUNE. I WONDER HOW MANY OF THEM HAVE THE COURAGE TO PRACTISE WHAT THEY PREACH.

JOSHI INVITED THEM TO DELIVER LECTURES AT A CHRISTIAN MISSION. AFTER THE LECTURE —

SHALL WE LEAVE?

YOU CAN'T LEAVE WITHOUT HAVING A CUP OF TEA.

THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE ORTHODOXY WERE IN FOR A SHOCK.

DID YOU SEE THE MORNING PAPERS? RANADE AND GOKHALE, I CAN UNDERSTAND. BUT TILAK! I NEVER DREAMT THAT TILAK WOULD HAVE TEA FROM A CHRISTIAN KITCHEN!

GOPALRAO HAD SEEN TO IT THAT THEIR NAMES WERE PUBLISHED IN THE NEWSPAPERS!

ALL THIS REFORM BUSINESS IS GOING TOO FAR!

YES. WE MUST EXPEL THEM FROM THE COMMUNITY UNLESS THEY ARE PREPARED TO PERFORM THE PURIFICATION CEREMONY.

LATER, AT TILAK'S HOME —

PLEASE AGREE TO PERFORM THE CEREMONY.

NO! I WON'T. IS MY RELIGION SO FRAGILE THAT IT CAN BE POLLUTED BY A CUP OF TEA FROM A CHRISTIAN'S HOUSE?

NO PRIEST HAS AGREED TO COME TO OUR HOUSE FOR YOUR FATHER'S SHRADDHA* CEREMONY.

DON'T WORRY. BALAM BHATTA WILL NOT LET YOU DOWN.

VISHWANATH, HIS ELDEST SON, WAS CURIOUS.

WHO IS BALAM BHATTA, DADA?

YOU'LL SEE HIM TOMORROW.

OH! SO DADA IS BALAM BHATTA, THE PRIEST.

FOR TILAK, HIMSELF A SCHOLAR OF SANSKRIT, THE NON-COOPERATION OF PRIESTS POSED NO PROBLEM.

HE KNEW THE VEDAS BETTER THAN THEY DID. AND THE MORE HE DELVED INTO THE VEDAS THE MORE CURIOUS HE BECAME ABOUT THEIR ANTIQUITY.

THE HYMNS WHICH SUGGEST THE POSITION OF THE SUN AND THE CONSTELLATIONS SHOULD THROW LIGHT ON THE AGE OF THE VEDAS.

BASED ON ASTRONOMICAL EVIDENCE TILAK ESTABLISHED THE PERIOD OF THE VEDAS AS 4000 B.C.

EVEN IN THE MIDST OF ALL HIS SCHOLARLY PURSUITS, TILAK HAD NOT FORGOTTEN THE COMMON MAN.

THE MASSES MUST BE EDUCATED ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS. THE FIRST STEP IS TO FIND A FORUM FOR BRINGING PEOPLE OF VARIOUS COMMUNITIES TOGETHER.

* DEATH ANNIVERSARY

TO ACHIEVE THIS, HE SET THE TRADITION OF PUBLICLY CELEBRATING THE GANESHA FESTIVAL.

LATER HE CELEBRATED THE BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF SHIVAJI AT RAIGAD, WHICH HAD ONCE BEEN THE CAPITAL OF THE MARATHAS.

SHIVAJI LOVED HIS COUNTRY AND HIS FREEDOM. HE WAS SELF-RESPECTING, COURAGEOUS, BRAVE AND NOBLE. LET HIS LIFE BE AN EXAMPLE TO ALL OF US.

AROUND THAT TIME, THE GOVERNMENT RAISED THE TAX* ON INDIAN CLOTH, TO HELP THE CLOTH FROM BRITAIN TO SELL BETTER.

FOR SWADESHI+ CLOTH, IT'S TOO EXPENSIVE! WHY SHOULD WE BUY IT WHEN IMPORTED CLOTH IS AVAILABLE FOR THE SAME PRICE?

IT'S THE NEW TAX. WE ARE HELPLESS. WHAT CAN WE DO?

TILAK, HOWEVER, DID NOT SIT BACK HELPLESS.

IF WE DON'T BUY SWADESHI CLOTH, WHO WILL? HOW WILL OUR PEOPLE, OUR TRADE SURVIVE? IF YOU LOVE YOUR COUNTRY AND YOUR PEOPLE, DON'T BUY BRITISH CLOTH! BOYCOTT IT!

* EXCISE DUTY + INDIGENOUS

ONCE WHEN FAMINE BROKE OUT IN MAHARASHTRA —

THE FARMERS ARE LEAVING THEIR VILLAGES! I MUST REACH THEM! INSTIL COURAGE INTO THEM! THEY MUST KNOW WHAT THEIR RIGHTS IN THEIR HOMELAND ARE!

TILAK DID NOT BELIEVE IN SENDING PETITIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT AS SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, THE MODERATES, DID. HIS METHODS WERE DIFFERENT.

THE CROPS HAVE FAILED AND YOU HAVE NEITHER FOOD NOR MONEY. ARE YOU GOING TO LOSE THE ROOF ABOVE YOUR HEAD TOO? YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO LIVE! CAN'T YOU FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHTS EVEN IN THE GRIP OF DEATH?

TILAK AND HIS SUPPORTERS WERE LABELLED EXTREMISTS. BUT THAT DID NOT DETER HIM.

GO BACK TO YOUR VILLAGES AND MAKE THE FARMERS CLAMOUR FOR FOOD AND FODDER. LET THE CLAMOUR PERSIST TILL THE DEAF GOVERNMENT HEARS THE CRY!

WE WILL NOT REST TILL THE CRY IS HEARD!

YOUNG AND OLD, TILAK'S VOLUNTEERS WENT TO THE VILLAGES CARRYING HIS MESSAGE.

FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHTS! DON'T BE AFRAID OF PETTY OFFICIALS! NO ONE CAN COMPEL YOU TO SELL YOUR LAND TO PAY TAXES. INSTEAD, THE GOVERNMENT MUST HELP YOU IN SUCH TIMES!

THE OFFICIALS RETALIATED BY ARRESTING THE VOLUNTEERS. AT PENN A FURIOUS MOB SURROUNDED THE MAGISTRATE.

WHEN TILAK RUSHED TO THE SCENE —

BAL GANGADHAR TILAK KI JAI!

PEACE! PEACE, MY FRIENDS! I'LL SPEAK TO THE MAGISTRATE. LEAVE THE MATTER TO ME.

THE MOB MELTED AWAY. SUCH WAS THE SPELL CAST BY TILAK!

WHILE TILAK WAS BUSY WITH THE STRUGGLE TO SECURE FAMINE RELIEF FOR THE FARMERS, THE PLAGUE STRUCK PUNE. THE GOVERNMENT WAS AT FIRST INDIFFERENT AND TOOK NO MEASURES TO ARREST THE SPREAD OF THE DREADED DISEASE.

FINALLY WHEN IT DID ACT, IT DID SO WITH A VENGEANCE. ONE CHARLES RAND WAS APPOINTED PLAGUE COMMISSIONER.

I WANT EVERY HOUSE IN PUNE DISINFECTED. PUT ANY-ONE WHO IS ILL IN HOSPITAL AND TAKE THE RELATIVES TO THE CAMP OUTSIDE THE TOWN—BY FORCE IF NECESSARY. THAT'S ALL. YOU MAY GO.

BUT THERE WAS TROUBLE AFOOT.

OUR PEOPLE DON'T HAVE ANY TRUST IN THE SOLDIERS. AND I DON'T BLAME THEM. THE SOLDIERS ARE BRUTAL.

THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE FEARS OF OUR PEOPLE. I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO ABOUT IT.

TILAK WENT THE ROUNDS, SOMETIMES WITH THE SOLDIERS, SOMETIMES ALONE.

YOUR SON IS DOWN WITH THE PLAGUE. IT IS YOUR DUTY TO SEND HIM TO THE ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

NO! NO! THAT MEANS SURE DEATH! I WANT MY SON TO REMAIN IN MY HOUSE. I WILL NOT...

PLEASE LISTEN TO ME, KAKA*. TO SAVE HIS LIFE AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS AT HOME, YOU MUST SEND HIM TO THE HOSPITAL.

YOU KNOW BEST, BALWANTRAO. DO AS YOU WISH.

* UNCLE

JUST THEN THE SOLDIERS ARRIVED ON THE SCENE.

COME ON! LET'S GET THIS FILTHY HOLE DISINFECTED.

HEY, YOU! GET OUT OF THE BED.

LET HIM GO! THERE'S NO NEED TO BE SO ROUGH.

I HAVE A JOB TO DO. GET OUT OF MY WAY.

PLEASE LEAVE THAT ROOM ALONE. IT IS OUR ROOM OF WORSHIP.

DON'T LISTEN TO THE WILY OLD MAN! HE'S PROBABLY HIDING A PATIENT IN THERE!

THE OVERZEALOUS SOLDIERS DID NOT RESPECT THE FEELINGS OF THE CITIZENS. THEY HANDLED EVEN BABIES IN THEIR CRADLES WITHOUT ANY MERCY.

HEY, CATCH THIS BABY. A SURE CASE OF PLAGUE.

TILAK RAISED HIS VOICE AGAINST INHUMAN TREATMENT METED OUT TO THE SUFFERING PEOPLE OF PUNE. IN HIS ENGLISH WEEKLY, MAHRATTA, HE WROTE —

THE PLAGUE IS MORE MERCIFUL TO US THAN ITS HUMAN PROTOTYPE NOW REIGNING IN THE CITY...

HOW RIGHT TILAK IS! THEY CAUSE MORE MISERY THAN THE DISEASE DOES.

TILAK SET UP HIS OWN SEGREGATION CAMP FOR THE TERRIFIED VICTIMS AND THEIR RELATIVES. HE EVEN STARTED A FREE KITCHEN FOR THE POOR IN THE CAMP.

ALL THE LEADERS HAVE FLED, LEAVING US TO THE MERCY OF THE PLAGUE AND THE SOLDIERS. TILAK ALONE HAS STOOD BY US.

HE IS THE REAL LEADER.

NORMALCY SLOWLY RETURNED BUT THE WOUNDS INFLICTED BY THE THOUGHTLESS SOLDIERS DID NOT HEAL. AN ANGRY MAN, DAMODAR HARI CHAPHEKAR, SHOT AT RAND.

THERE WAS A MASSIVE HUNT FOR THE UNKNOWN CULPRIT.

MEANWHILE, THE GOVERNMENT IMPOSED HEAVY FINES ON THE CITIZENS.

LOOK! LISTEN TO WHAT TILAK HAS TO SAY. HAS THE GOVERNMENT LOST ITS SENSES? TO RULE DOES NOT MEAN TO INDULGE IN REPRISALS.

TILAK IS WISE. BUT WILL THE GOVERNMENT SEE IT IN THAT LIGHT?

THEY CERTAINLY DIDN'T.

THE TIMES OF INDIA* ALLEGES THAT THE CULPRIT DREW INSPIRATION FROM TILAK'S WRITINGS AND SPEECHES.

THE ENGLISHMEN ARE SO PANIC-STRICKEN THAT THEY SEE MURDERERS EVEN IN THEIR OWN SHADOWS!

WHEN RAND DIED OF THE BULLET WOUND, THE ENGLISHMEN STEPPED UP THEIR CAMPAIGN AGAINST TILAK. FINALLY THE GOVERNMENT SWUNG INTO ACTION.

TILAK HAS BEEN ARRESTED.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS LOST ITS SENSES.

TILAK WAS HELD ON A CHARGE OF SEDITION.

DOES PRAISING SHIVAJI MAHARAJ AMOUNT TO SEDITION? TILAK HAS TAUGHT US TO FIGHT FOR OUR RIGHTS. IS THAT SEDITION?

HE HAS SHOWN US THE WAY TO GET GRIEVANCES REDRESSED LAWFULLY. IS THAT SEDITION?

WE OPENLY DARE TO CRITICISE THE GOVERNMENT. A FEW YEARS AGO WE COULD NOT EVEN THINK OF SUCH A THING!

THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS AGAINST TILAK. HE HAS INSTILLED COURAGE INTO US. THAT IS SEDITION ACCORDING TO THEM.

* THEN CONTROLLED BY A BRITISH COMPANY

SOME OF HIS FRIENDS HINTED THAT TILAK SHOULD OFFER AN APOLOGY AND SECURE HIS RELEASE. TILAK REFUSED.

MY POSITION AMONG THE PEOPLE ENTIRELY DEPENDS UPON MY CHARACTER; AND IF I AM COWED DOWN BY THE PERSECUTION, I THINK, LIVING IN MAHARASHTRA IS AS GOOD AS LIVING IN THE ANDAMANS*.

AS EXPECTED THE COURT FOUND TILAK GUILTY. THE SENTENCE WAS EIGHTEEN MONTHS' RIGOROUS IMPRISONMENT. WHEN THE NEWS REACHED HIS WIFE, SHE FELL SERIOUSLY ILL.

BEG THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPRISON ME TOO! I HAVE BEEN HIS PARTNER IN EVERYTHING.

TILAK TOO FELL ILL IN PRISON. HE LOST 21 POUNDS!

HOWEVER, A MUSLIM WARDER TRIED TO BE OF HELP TO HIM.

DADASAHEB, I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE FOOD COOKED WITH ONION AND GARLIC. HAVE SOME BETEL NUT. IT MIGHT HELP.

YOU ARE KIND BUT YOU ARE BREAKING PRISON RULES. YOU SHOULDN'T.

THE NEXT DAY, HE BROUGHT SOME COPRA AND JAGGERY. TILAK DECIDED TO LIE TO PUT HIM OFF.

I CAN'T EAT THESE. I HAVE A SORE MOUTH.

I'LL GET YOU ALMONDS AND SUGAR CANDY THEN.

TILAK HAD TO ACCEPT DEFEAT BEFORE SUCH PERSISTENCE.

* WHERE POLITICAL PRISONERS USED TO BE DEPORTED

WHEN TILAK WAS SHIFTED FROM BOMBAY TO YERAVDA JAIL, CHAPHEKAR WHO HAD BEEN CAUGHT AND SENTENCED TO DEATH, TOOK SPECIAL PERMISSION TO MEET HIM IN HIS CELL.

BALWANTRAO, I WANT TO DIE WITH THE GITA IN MY HAND. WILL YOU GIVE ME YOUR COPY?

WITH PLEASURE!

HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN MISGUIDED IN KILLING RAND. BUT CAN ANYONE DOUBT HIS PATRIOTISM?

A FEW DAYS LATER, A BENGALI GENTLEMAN CALLED ON TILAK.

PROF. MAX MUELLER HAS SENT YOU A GIFT — HIS TRANSLATION OF THE RIG VEDA. HE IS TRYING HIS BEST TO HAVE YOU RELEASED.

I AM HONOURED AND GRATEFUL.

THE RARE GIFT FROM THE FAMOUS GERMAN SCHOLAR WON FOR TILAK FACILITIES FOR READING AND WRITING IN HIS CELL.

ONE OF THE VERSES HE CAME ACROSS WHILE READING THE TRANSLATION MADE HIM PAUSE AND THINK.

"MANY DAYS PASSED BEFORE THE SUN ROSE." HOW COULD THIS BE TRUE... UNLESS...

... UNLESS THE ARYANS HAD ONCE LIVED IN THE ARCTIC! YES! THAT'S IT! IT HAS TO BE!

IT WAS THIS IDEA THAT LATER LED HIM TO WRITE THE BOOK — THE ARCTIC HOME IN THE VEDAS.

AT LAST ON SEPTEMBER 6, 1898, TILAK WAS RELEASED. THE TEMPLE BELLS OF PUNE RANG OUT ECHOING THE JOY OF THE PEOPLE.

FIVE YEARS LATER, THE PLAGUE BROKE OUT AGAIN IN PUNE. THIS TIME IT CLAIMED TILAK'S ELDEST SON.

WHY, OH WHY DIDN'T FATE SPARE VISHWANATH?

WHY SHOULD IT? LIVES HAVE BEEN SNATCHED AWAY FROM SEVERAL HOMES. ONE WAS SNATCHED FROM OURS TOO.

BEARING HIS GRIEF WITH STOICISM, TILAK WORKED WITH EXTRA ZEAL.

THEN IN JULY 1905, LORD CURZON ANNOUNCED THE PARTITION OF BENGAL. THE PARTITION CAME INTO FORCE ON OCTOBER 16, 1905.

THEIR AIM IS TO DISUNITE THE BENGALI MUSLIMS AND HINDUS.

BUT THEY WILL NOT SUCCEED.

TILAK'S PREDICTION PROVED TRUE.

THE PARTITION ONLY GAVE FURTHER IMPETUS TO THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT. IN PUNE AS IN THE REST OF INDIA, PEOPLE BOYCOTTED FOREIGN GOODS. STUDENTS MADE A HUGE BONFIRE OF FOREIGN CLOTHES; THE FIRST OF MANY TO COME.

TILAK STARTED A GLASS FACTORY AT TALEGAON AND A CO-OPERATIVE STORE FOR THE SALE OF SWADESHI GOODS IN BOMBAY.

OUR RULERS ARE TRADERS AS WELL AS POLITICIANS. IF THE ONE IS PRESSED THE OTHER IS BOUND TO BE AFFECTED! IF WE ARE SELF-RELIANT WE WILL BECOME POLITICALLY FREE.

SINCE SWARAJ WAS THE GOAL OF TILAK AND HIS FRIENDS, LIKE LALA LAJPATRAI OF PUNJAB AND AUROBINDO GHOSE OF BENGAL, THEY CAME TO BE KNOWN AS NATIONALISTS.

...YOUR FUTURE RESTS ENTIRELY IN YOUR HANDS. IF YOU MEAN TO BE FREE, YOU CAN BE FREE; IF YOU DO NOT, YOU WILL FALL AND BE FOREVER FALLEN...

THE GOVERNMENT TRIED IN VAIN TO CURB THE NATIONALISTS. LALA LAJPATRAI WAS DEPORTED TO MANDALAY IN BURMA. BUT —

...IF YOUR AGITATION STOPPED AS SOON AS ONE DEPORTATION TOOK PLACE, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD GET AWAY WITH THE IDEA THAT REPRESSION HAD TRIUMPHED.

WHEN LAJPATRAI WAS RELEASED IN NOVEMBER 1907 —

LAJPATRAI SHOULD BE MADE THE PRESIDENT OF THE SURAT CONGRESS.

THAT WOULD BE A FITTING REPLY TO THE GOVERNMENT!

THE MODERATES HOWEVER WANTED DR. RASHBEHARI GHOSH.

WHEN THE TWO PARTIES MET —

IF WE ELECT LAJPATRAI, IT'LL TEACH THE GOVERNMENT A LESSON.

BUT WE CAN'T OPENLY CHALLENGE THE GOVERNMENT! THEY'LL STAMP US OUT.

AT THE CONGRESS SESSION IN SURAT, TILAK WAS NOT ALLOWED TO SPEAK BEFORE DR. GHOSH'S ELECTION.

I'VE A RIGHT TO ADDRESS THE DELEGATES. YOU CAN'T STOP ME!

BUT THEY DID AND THE CONGRESS SPLIT INTO TWO GROUPS.

THIS WILL NEVER DO. A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF CANNOT STAND. WE ARE PLAYING INTO THE HANDS OF THE BRITISH. WE MUST REMAIN UNITED FOR OUR GOAL IS ONE.

AROUND THIS TIME, REVOLUTIONARIES WHO BELIEVED IN VIOLENCE BECAME ACTIVE. ON APRIL 30, 1908 THE FIRST BOMB WAS THROWN AT THE BRITISH RESIDENTS OF MUZAFFARPUR.

THE EXPLOSION ECHOED THROUGH THE COUNTRY. THE GOVERNMENT SWUNG INTO ACTION AND SEVERAL JOURNALISTS WERE JAILED.

TILAK, I WANT TO GIVE YOU A TIP. THE GOVERNMENT IS PLANNING TO ARREST YOU.

WHAT DOES IT MATTER? THE WHOLE COUNTRY IS LIKE A VAST PRISON. THEY ARE NOW GOING TO CONFINE ME IN A SMALLER ONE.

A FEW DAYS LATER, TILAK WAS ARRESTED. THE CHARGE WAS SEDITION; THE OFFENCE, AN ARTICLE HE HAD WRITTEN.

THE CASE AGAINST TILAK CAME UP BEFORE THE BOMBAY HIGH COURT. THE ADVOCATE-GENERAL QUOTED FROM THE ARTICLE TO PRESS HIS CLAIM THAT TILAK WAS GUILTY.

"THE BOMB PARTY HAS COME INTO EXISTENCE AS A RESULT OF THE OPPRESSION PRACTISED BY THE OFFICIAL CLASS ...THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS CALAMITY MUST, THEREFORE, BE THROWN NOT ON POLITICAL AGITATION, WRITINGS, OR SPEECHES BUT ON THE THOUGHTLESSNESS AND THE OBSTINACY OF THE OFFICIAL CLASS."

TILAK CONTENDED THAT WHILE HE DEPLORED THE USE OF BOMBS THE ONLY WAY TO PREVENT SUCH OCCURRENCES WAS TO REFORM THE ADMINISTRATION. HE MADE A FERVENT APPEAL TO THE JURY.

...FOR ME IT CAN ONLY BE A MATTER OF A FEW YEARS, BUT FUTURE GENERATIONS WILL LOOK TO YOUR VERDICT AND SEE WHETHER YOU HAVE JUDGED WRONG OR RIGHT. THE VERDICT MAY LIKELY BE A MEMORABLE ONE IN THE HISTORY OF THE FREEDOM OF THE INDIAN PRESS...

WHEN THE JURY FOUND HIM GUILTY —

I MAINTAIN THAT I AM INNOCENT....IT MAY BE THE WILL OF PROVIDENCE THAT THE CAUSE WHICH I REPRESENT MAY PROSPER MORE BY MY SUFFERINGS THAN BY MY REMAINING FREE.

TILAK WAS SENTENCED TO TRANSPORTATION FOR SIX YEARS. IN BOMBAY A SIX-DAY STRIKE WAS OBSERVED AND ALL THE TEXTILE MILLS WERE CLOSED.

THE POLICE FIRED INDISCRIMINATELY AT THE DEMONSTRATORS.

TILAK WAS DEPORTED TO MANDALAY. 'BANDE MATARAM' THE BENGALI WEEKLY, BID HIM A PATHETIC FAREWELL.

GO, TILAK, WHEREVER YOU MAY BE SENT TO CRUSH YOUR BODY... THE CANKER OF THE CHAINS WILL NOT ONLY EAT INTO YOUR LIMBS BUT ALSO INTO EVERY HEART OF THE COUNTRY TO STIR IT UP TO ITS DUTY. YOU HAVE FULFILLED YOUR MISSION...

TILAK SPENT FIVE YEARS AND EIGHT MONTHS IN MANDALAY. HIS SOLE COMPANIONS WERE BOOKS AND BIRDS.

HE BEGAN TO WRITE A TREATISE ON THE GITA — THE GITA RAHASYA*.

TILAK'S PROLONGED DETENTION TOTALLY UNNERVED HIS WIFE AND SHE DIED WHEN HE WAS IN MANDALAY. WHEN THE JAILOR CAME INTO TILAK'S CELL —

I'M SORRY. IT MUST BE A GREAT LOSS TO YOU.

ONE OF US HAD TO FACE THE OTHER'S DEATH. I AM GLAD IT IS I. I ONLY WISH I COULD HAVE BEEN WITH HER WHEN THE END CAME.

* THE SECRET OF THE GITA

ON JUNE 17, 1914 AT 2-00 A.M. THERE WAS A KNOCK AT GAIKWAD WADA, TILAK'S RESIDENCE.

WHO IS IT?

IT'S ME. THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE.

THE WHOLE HOUSEHOLD WOKE UP. TILAK WAS BACK!

THE NEWS SPREAD. FRIENDS CAME RUNNING TO HIS HOUSE. THEY TALKED TILL DAYBREAK.

TELL ME WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE COUNTRY.

LALA LAJPATRAI, BIPIN CHANDRA PAL AND AUROBINDO HAVE GONE INTO SELF-IMPOSED EXILE. THE PRESS IS GAGGED. NATIONAL SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED.

SOME WELL-WISHERS TRIED TO DISSUADE TILAK FROM TAKING PART IN POLITICS.

DADA, GIVE UP POLITICS NOW AT LEAST. DEVOTE YOUR TIME TO LITERATURE.

WHAT! INDULGE IN LITERATURE WHEN THE COUNTRY IS ROTTING IN SLAVERY?

SOMEBODY HAS TO DO THE WORK I AM DOING. IF NO ONE DOES IT, THE BRITISH WILL RULE AS THEY LIKE.

TILAK TOOK UP THE CAUSE OF HOME RULE, THE PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO FORM THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT. HE TOURED ALL OVER INDIA AND SPOKE TO THE PEOPLE.

HOME RULE IS THE ONLY REMEDY. INSIST ON YOUR RIGHTS. INDIA IS YOUR OWN HOME, ISN'T IT?

THEN WHY NOT MANAGE IT YOURSELVES?

WE DO NOT ASK FOR SEPARATION FROM ENGLAND. BUT OUR DOMESTIC AFFAIRS MUST BE IN OUR HANDS.

IT MUST BE NOTED THAT TILAK DEMANDED ONLY HOME RULE, NOT TOTAL INDEPENDENCE. THE TIME WAS NOT YET RIPE FOR IT.

TILAK BY THEN HAD COME TO BE REVERED AS LOKAMANYA* BY PEOPLE ALL OVER INDIA. WHEN HE WENT TO LUCKNOW TO ATTEND THE CONGRESS SESSION, FOLLOWING THE UNIFICATION OF THE MODERATES AND NATIONALISTS, HE WAS TAKEN OUT IN PROCESSION.

LOKAMANYA TILAK KI JAI!

* RESPECTED BY THE PEOPLE

SOME ENTHUSIASTIC YOUTHS UNHARNESSED THE HORSES AND DREW THE CARRIAGE THEMSELVES.

VICTORY TO LOKAMANYA TILAK!

AT THE LUCKNOW CONGRESS —

SWARAJ IS MY BIRTHRIGHT AND I SHALL HAVE IT.

LATER, TILAK VISITED ENGLAND TO PRESENT INDIA'S CASE FOR HOME RULE...

...AND WON MANY FRIENDS, NOTABLY FROM THE LABOUR PARTY.

ON AUGUST 1, 1920, EXACTLY EIGHT MONTHS AFTER HIS RETURN TO INDIA, TILAK DIED. BUT THE CAUSE FOR WHICH HE FOUGHT WAS TAKEN UP BY MILLIONS OF HIS COUNTRYMEN.

BRITISHERS, QUIT INDIA!

AND TILAK'S LIFELONG STRUGGLE AT LAST BORE FRUIT ON AUGUST 15, 1947, WHEN INDIA BECAME INDEPENDENT.